



March 8, 2016

Testimony

David Kluczowski, Town of Berlin, Collector of Revenue
Connecticut Tax Collectors' Association, Inc
Legislative Co-Chair

SB #408 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF DELINQUENT HOMEOWNERS

My name is David Kluczowski and I am the Legislative Co-Chair for the Connecticut Tax Collectors' Association as well as the Revenue Collector for the Town of Berlin. I urge this Committee to reject SB #408 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF DELINQUENT HOMEOWNERS.

Let's be honest, nobody likes to pay municipal property taxes whether you pay them timely or late. As a result, as a tax collector, the collection of property taxes is no easy task. One constant that we rely on within the statutory procedures is uniformity. By this I mean, you pay on time there is never any interest. You pay late; the interest accrues at a rate of 1.5% per month with no variation under any circumstance. The above is uniform procedure for every town, for every property tax type, for every taxpayer, in every situation.

The uniformity that we practice as tax collectors within the statutory law provided to us allows for us to collect property taxes in an efficient, effective and equitable manner. Therefore it is absolutely imperative that SB#408 does not pass. The reducing of the interest rate upon the filing of a judicial foreclosure greatly threatens our ability to collect revenue for our municipalities. Yes it would provide a benefit to the delinquent taxpayer but it would be at the expense of the residents and businesses that pay their property taxes on time.

Furthermore, with the ever increasing lack of State aid each year, limiting the powers of the municipalities to collect revenue is like pouring salt on an already open wound. This proposal has painted a picture of the municipality as the enemy when in reality this is hardly the truth. There are already a number of programs available to taxpayers who are struggling to assist them, including tax specific relief programs for seniors, veterans, and disabled taxpayers, bankruptcy protection, and a number of local option programs available that many municipalities offer.

The existing statutes in place are extremely effective for all the reasons stated above. Yes, they can be sometimes harsh to the taxpayer, but virtually every tax collector in Connecticut is sympathetic to them and is willing to work with them in every manner possible that is statutorily allowed.

Therefore, I strongly urge that you oppose SB 408.

Sincerely,

David Kluczowski, CCMC
Revenue Collector
Town of Berlin
CTx Legislation Co-Chair